



DRUG AND DRUG TESTING POLICY for Great Torrington School

This Policy is aimed at supporting the school's culture in promoting:
READY RESPECTFUL SAFE

Approving Committee: **FGB**

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Great Torrington School

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DRUG AND DRUG TESTING POLICY

Great Torrington School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The Drugs Policy has been developed with reference to Department for Education advice and guidance: DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools.

Rationale

It is the aim of Great Torrington School to help all pupils to be able to take their place safely in a world where a wide range of drugs exist. We recognise that some drugs have beneficial effects, but also that every drug has potential to harm. For this reason, all drugs need appropriate and responsible care and management. In order to be able to make informed choices, staff and pupils need to understand the nature of drugs, their social and legal status, their uses and effects. We will ensure pupils affected by their own or other's drug misuse should have early access to support through the school and other local services.

Aims

- To support the school's endeavour to maintain the safety and well-being of all pupils, staff and visitors
- Ensure the school is fulfilling its safeguarding responsibilities by ensuring that students are protected from harm, and that those for who drugs are a concern, receive the appropriate care and support
- To clarify legal responsibilities, entitlements and obligations
- To support all the members of the school community by providing clear guidance and procedures on drug related issues to ensure clarity and consistency
- To develop a whole school approach to drug education in the context of the school curriculum
- Establish relationships with local children and young people's services, health services and voluntary sector organisations to ensure support is available to pupils affected by drug misuse (including parental drug or alcohol problems).

Where and to whom the policy applies

This policy applies to all school staff, pupils, parents/carers, trustees, visitors and any other agencies working with the school. The policy applies to the school premises, the school day, while travelling to and from school, journeys in school time, work experience and day trips.

The schools' stance towards drugs, health and the needs of pupils

The possession, use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs at any of Great Torrington School premises is not acceptable. Regarding authorised drugs please see the Supporting Pupils at School with GTS Medical Policy. The school is committed to safeguarding the health, safety and well-being of all members of the school community. In providing drugs education and responding to incidents involving drugs, our first concern is the pastoral care and health and safety of pupils.

Key roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher and DSL have the responsibility to oversee and coordinate drug issues including liaising with the police and agreeing a shared approach to dealing with drug-related incidents.

Inclusive definition of drugs

Great Torrington School defines a drug as a substance which, when taken into the body, changes the way we feel, the way we perceive things, and the way our body works. This definition includes illegal, psychoactive and unauthorised substances and legal substances such as alcohol, tobacco, vapes, solvents and medicines. New psychoactive substances are included in the school drug policy as unauthorised substances and treated as such. If there is uncertainty about what a substance is, it will be treated as a controlled drug.

Drug Education

Drug education is a major component of drug prevention

● Context

We will provide all pupils with drug education in our schools. This will be an integral part of our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). This is a well-planned programme delivered in a supportive environment, where we endeavour to make pupils feel able to engage in open discussion and be confident about asking for help if necessary. We provide 1:1 support for our pupils creating opportunities for further questions.

● Aims

We aim to increase knowledge and understanding and clarify misconceptions about: - the short and long-term effects and risks of drugs - the rules and laws relating to drugs - the impact of drugs on individuals,

families and communities - local and national use - the complex moral, social, emotional, economic and political issues surrounding drugs.

● **Ethos**

Drug education in our school aims to enable pupils to make healthy informed choices by increasing their knowledge, exploring a range of attitudes towards drug use and developing and practicing decision making skills. The programme we follow will be based on national and local guidelines for good practice and be appropriate to the age and experience of our pupils. We want to develop pupils' personal and social skills to make informed decisions and keep themselves safe and healthy, including: - promoting positive attitudes to healthy lifestyles - assessing, avoiding and managing risk - communicating effectively - resisting pressures - finding information, help and advice - devising problem-solving and coping strategies - developing and maintaining self-awareness and self-esteem in order to motivate them to value their welfare and conscientious care of themselves.

● **Content and delivery**

Teaching will be based on an understanding that a variety of approaches should be used in order to meet the differing needs and learning styles of pupils. It is recognised that active or participatory learning styles can be particularly helpful in developing skills, knowledge and values. We are aware that for many of our pupil's repetition will be essential due to learning needs.

Use of visitors and outside speakers

We can use visitors to support our planned teacher lead programme of education, in line with national and local guidance, so that their contribution fits our needs, and they are clear how their input fits into our planned programme. The class teacher or a member of staff is always present when visitors are working with our pupils. Local police are keen to collaborate with schools by using drugs dogs as part of educating pupils about the risks and consequences of drug use.

We continue to establish relationships with local children and young people's services, health services and voluntary sector organisations to ensure support is available to pupils affected by drug misuse (including parental drug or alcohol problems). Links to supportive national organisations are included at the end of this document.

Managing drug related incidents: routine arrangements

Definition: A drug related incident may include any of the following:

- A pupil who is suspected of being under the influence of a drug
- Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia on school premises
- Possession of drugs by an individual on school premises
- Use of drugs by an individual on school premises

- Supply of drugs on school premises
- Individuals disclosing information about their drug use
- Rumours of drug possession supply or drug use
- Reports of drug possession supply or drug use
- Knowledge of parental substance misuse
- County lines

The school will consider each incident individually and will employ a range of responses to deal with each incident.

Any response will balance the needs of the individual with those of the wider community and will aim to provide students with the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and develop as individuals.

• **Medicines**

The school has a policy/procedure for the administration of medicines that must be followed for everyone's safety. See GTS Medical Policy.

• **Alcohol**

Pupils are not allowed to bring in alcohol on the premises. Parents and visitors under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises and return at a later date for the safety of the whole school.

• **Solvents**

Great Torrington School will ensure that potentially hazardous substances are stored safely, and pupils will be supervised if it is necessary that they come into contact with them in the course of their work. Pupils are not permitted to be in possession of solvent-based products.

• **Illegal drugs**

No illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia are permitted to be brought on to or used on any of Great Torrington School premises.

If a pupil is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on school premises, the school will prioritise the safety of the young person and those around them. If necessary, it will be dealt with as a medical emergency, administering First Aid and summoning appropriate support. Depending on the circumstances, parents or the police may or may not be contacted. If the child is felt to be at risk the Safeguarding Policy will come into effect and social services may be contacted. It will be at the discretion

of the Headteacher as to whether the situation will be addressed and dealt with there and then or whether the pupil concerned will be sent home.

Guiding principles

- The DSL and Headteacher are responsible for coordinating the management of drug related incidents, offering sources of support and liaising with outside agencies.
- Incidents will be dealt with after making an assessment of the situation and be reported to the Headteacher.
- Appropriate support will be offered to those with substance misuse problems, including referring to YSmart who are commissioned by the Local Authority. WE will follow Safeguarding guidelines with regards to parental misuse.
- Evidence of drug use, possession or supplying may result in permanent exclusion.
- The school will always seek to respond appropriately to each individual case by selecting from a range of possible responses, that which is most appropriate.

Procedures

● Medical emergencies

If an individual is unconscious, is having trouble breathing, is seriously confused or disoriented, has taken a harmful toxic substance or is otherwise at immediate risk of immediate harm medical help will be sought and first aid given if required. The priority will be the pupil's safety.

● Searching pupils

Where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil may have in their possession or be under the influence of an illegal or unauthorised substance, they will be encouraged to hand over the item voluntarily. If the individual refuses, the Headteacher and SLT can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances (See DfE Reasonable Force Guidance - [Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance](#) to conduct a search for prohibited items without consent (Section 550ZB (5) of the Education Act 1996). Where possible the gender of the member of staff carrying out the search will correspond to the gender of the pupil. Prohibited items would include:

- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- psychoactive substances or 'legal highs'
- If school staff are unable to identify the legal status of a drug, it should be treated as a controlled drug.
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Following a search, whether or not anything is found, the school will make a record of the person searched, the reason for the search, the time and the place, who was present and note the outcomes and any follow-up action.

● **Individuals in possession of drugs**

If any pupil or adult in school is found in possession of an unauthorised drug it will be confiscated. Wherever possible a second adult will be present. If the drug is suspected to be illegal, the school will contact the police and immediately hand over the drug as soon as possible and not stored for any longer than is necessary, if stored on site then the substance should be stored in a locked container with limited access. The incident will be recorded on CPOMs and if the police are involved, the police incident reference number will be included in the CPOMs report. Talking with an individual about a drug related incident will have as its purpose to confirm or reject suspicions or allegations, rather than to conduct a wider investigation. Parents/carers of pupils will be informed, unless this is not in the best interests of the pupil. Other professionals from the LEA, YSmart, Youth Service, Police, School Health Service, Social Service etc may be informed or consulted as appropriate.

Working with the Police - A senior member of staff who is responsible for the school's drugs policy should liaise with the police and agree a shared approach to dealing with drug-related incidents.

● **In-School Testing Procedure**

In some cases, if the use of a controlled drug is suspected by a pupil or a staff member, the school reserves the right to carry out a drugs test. Testing is carried out in accordance with a strict procedure. This procedure is updated from time to time as experience and/or scientific advances indicate. Where priority medical treatment is necessary this takes precedence over any testing requirements.

If a pupil is under the influence of a drug and needs medical treatment, they must tell staff what they have taken, if they are in a fit state to do so, in order to receive the best help possible.

In the event of a pupil being suspected of misusing controlled drugs, he or she may be asked to use a Surface Wipe Screening Kit. Parental consent will be sought for this to happen, prior to the test being carried out. If the School is unable to contact the parents, a test may still be carried out, and parents will be informed as soon as possible. If the pupil is not in a fit state on a given day to undergo a drug test, the school may require them to do so at a later stage.

The test would be carried out by two members of the Senior Leadership team and the results need to be corroborated by both. Without good reason, refusal to engage may be viewed as a 'positive test result'. If parents or pupils refuse to agree to the drug testing procedure, either on the phone or in person it will not be carried out, but parents will be expected to come and collect their child; sanctions will be determined on an individual basis.

● Support for pupils

Following actions to preserve immediate safety, the health and emotional needs of pupils will be considered. Support is available to ensure a caring response to pupils in distress. Interventions will be considered if the school feels a pupil is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether their own or that of their parent or carer. Such interventions may include consultation and subsequent referral.

● Recording

All incidents will be recorded within 24 hours on CPOMS .

● Confidentiality

Complete secrecy can never be promised to a pupil, though information given in confidence will only be disclosed to anyone else in the interests of Child Protection. If a pupil discloses that they are using a drug without medical authorisation, all possible action will be taken to ensure that the pupil comes to no serious harm if this is considered a significant risk. Staff have a commitment to inform the pupil in advance of any disclosure of information to others and if possible, enable the pupil to be involved in the process. Staff are committed where possible, to protect a young person's anonymity where their disclosure may implicate others. Regarding disclosures staff need to make pupils aware of the limits of confidentiality and that pupil safety is a priority.

● Sanctions

Responses to sanctions against pupils who commit drug offences will be decided following dialogue between the Headteacher, appropriate member(s) of staff, and Designated Safeguarding Lead. Possible responses include:

- targeted intervention
- referral
- counselling
- behaviour support plans/contracts
- inter-agency programmes
- fixed-term exclusion
- a managed move
- permanent exclusion

Responses and sanctions will take into account:

- the seriousness of the incident
- the short- and long-term welfare of the pupil concerned
- the short- and long-term welfare of other pupils
- guidance in DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools [DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools](#)
- consistency with disciplinary action for other drug related incidents
- consistency with disciplinary action for other misdemeanours.

(See Behaviour Policy for Sanctions, Disciplines and Exclusions)

Staff training and support

We recognise the need for staff to receive appropriate training and continuous professional development to support their work in delivering the school programme of drug education and dealing appropriately with incidents should they arise, our membership to the PSHE Association provides us with CPD for a range of topics including Effective Drug and Alcohol Education.

Links to other policies

See also

GTS Behaviour policy.

GTS Anti-Bullying policy,

GTS Health & Safety policy,

GTS Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions Policy

GTS Safeguarding policy.